

**STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD  
BOARD HEARING SESSION – DIVISION OF WATER QUALITY  
DECEMBER 5, 2017**

**ITEM 10**

**SUBJECT**

PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE WATER QUALITY CONTROL PLAN FOR ENCLOSED BAYS AND ESTUARIES: SEDIMENT QUALITY PROVISIONS

**DISCUSSION**

California Water Code section 13393 requires the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) to develop sediment quality objectives (SQOs) for toxic pollutants for California's enclosed bays and estuaries. On September 16, 2008, the State Water Board adopted [Resolution No. 2008-0070](#) approving the Water Quality Control Plan for Enclosed Bays and Estuaries – Part 1 Sediment Quality (Plan). The Plan included narrative SQOs to protect benthic communities, utilizing an approach based upon multiple lines of evidence, as well as a narrative SQO developed to protect human health from exposure to contaminants in seafood. This effort, referred to as Phase 1 of the SQOs program, was approved by U.S. EPA on August 25, 2009. On April 6, 2011, the State Water Board adopted [Resolution No. 2011-0017](#) approving amendments to the Water Quality Control Plan for Enclosed Bays and Estuaries that consisted of a narrative SQO protecting wildlife and resident finfish from pollutants in sediments. This narrative SQO was approved by the Office of Administrative Law but is still awaiting approval from U.S. EPA.

The State Water Board is proposing new amendments to the Water Quality Control Plan for Enclosed Bays and Estuaries. These amendments, together with existing sediment quality provisions of the Enclosed Bays and Estuaries Plan, will be incorporated into the Inland Surface Waters, Enclosed Bays and Estuaries Plan of California (ISWEBE) once it is adopted. The amendments to the plan include application and implementation of the SQO protecting benthic communities from direct exposure to pollutants in sediments, and application and implementation of the SQO protecting human consumers of resident sportfish from contaminants that bioaccumulate from sediment into fish tissue. The amendments also include organizational and formatting changes to accommodate future incorporation in the ISWEBE. Adoption of the amendments will allow the Water Boards to more effectively interpret and implement the SQOs by providing a transparent, scientifically sound and effective process to better assess the effects caused by pollutants in sediments. Increased consistency in such assessments will help to reduce monitoring, regulatory requirements and costs while still protecting associated beneficial uses

**POLICY ISSUE**

None – This item is to receive comments on the [draft amendment](#).

**FISCAL IMPACT**

None

**REGIONAL WATER BOARD IMPACT**

None.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

None